



Childhood Connections

June 2, 2023

## Spotlight on Professionals

Spotlight on Professionals aims to share stories from those working in childhood programs. This includes all professionals such as home visiting, early intervention, child care, Head Start, preschool, and afterschool. These stories are also available on the [Early Connections website](#).



Photo Credit: Toni Reynolds

The spotlight this month is on Toni Reynolds. After high school, she enrolled at UMKC and graduated with a BA in Elementary Education. She had her heart set on being a 2nd or 3rd grade teacher. Toni shares that she was “desperately seeking employment” after college graduation.

She had friends recommend applying for a home visiting position. Toni explained that she had no idea what home visiting entailed, but she knew it involved working with children so she decided “it could be a fill-in job” until she found a teaching position. She was hired on with Triality (now Easterseals Midwest) in November of 2010 as a parent educator.

Toni worked in the role of parent educator for 11 years. She exclaims, “switching to home visiting was the best thing I have ever done in my life. That is why I stayed. After a year and half into it, I told myself I was going to keep doing it and see where it goes”. Toni shared that an opportunity came up when Easterseals received an expansion grant in 2021 for 21 counties in Missouri. She was mentoring alongside other parent educators in preparation of their expansion. Six months later she was hired for a management position.

For someone who once wanted to be a classroom teacher, Toni shared that she wished someone had shown her other occupations in Early Childhood, like home visiting. In her position today, she has been able to provide prenatal support along with helping children and mothers. Toni said it is important to share the impact that parent educators have on the early childhood field and is passionate about the work she does every day.

**NEW! MOPD is Available**



We are excited to announce the opening of the new Missouri Professional Development (MOPD) system! This is where you can find, register, and complete clock hour trainings and much more.

The MOPD system replaces the OPEN Initiative Toolbox and the Missouri Workshop Calendar. Here's some important information to remember:

- Your MOPD ID will remain the same if you already had an ID prior to the new MOPD system.
- Directors cannot log in for other staff. Each user (e.g. each staff member) will have to log in individually to find their information and create an account in the new MOPD system.
- Data from previous trainings and employment records were merged into the new MOPD system.

You can find instructions, log in information, and more announcements on the [MOPD system webpage](#).

#### **UPDATE! Child Care Relief Funds**

There are several child care relief grants currently available to child care providers.

- Two grants are available to support child care providers to strengthen the child care workforce. Learn more about the Recruitment (New Hire) and Workforce Innovation grants in this [Frequently Asked Questions document](#). You can review the Instructions and Terms & Conditions for each grant on the [Child Care Relief Funds website](#). Applications close on June 30, 2023.
- Innovation Expansion grants are open to help programs expand their capacity. Learn more in this [recorded webinar](#) (approx. 25 minutes). You can review the Instructions and Terms & Conditions on the [Innovation Expansion website](#). Applications close on June 30, 2023.
- The Annual Training Costs grant supports child care providers with the costs associated with training costs in 2023. You can review the Instructions and Terms & Conditions on the [Annual Training Costs website](#). Applications close on July 15, 2023.

#### **UPDATE! Contact Us**

The Office of Childhood [Contact Us](#) document has been revised to add the MOPD system. Use this document to contact any OOC programs and personnel.

#### **NEW! Free Trainings Available**

We wanted to let you know about the training dates for [Ages & Stages](#) and [Conscious Discipline for Home Visitors](#). View each flyer to learn more. You can register using the links on these flyers.

#### **APPLY NOW! Afterschool Grants**

The Afterschool Program has two competitive grants for [school age afterschool programs](#) that are now open: the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) grant and the School Age Community (SAC) grant. Awards are subject to availability of funding.

#### **REMINDER! Scholarships for Educators**

T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI scholarships are available to professionals working in licensed child care programs, you can [register here](#).

Help us spread the word about these scholarships

Check out all of the child care relief funds applications on the [Child Care Relief Funds website](#).

### REMINDER! Free Training

Missouri Supporting Early Childhood Administrators (MO-SECA) provides thousands of early childhood administrators across the state with knowledge, skills, and connections they need to effectively lead and operate sustainable, quality programs.

MO-SECA provides no-cost training, tools, and one-on-one coaching to help child care administrators effectively manage their business operations. Business training curriculum includes fiscal management, record keeping, QuickBooks for child care businesses, risk management, supervision, human resources, and strategic communications to name a few.

- There are over 200 in-person trainings being offered across the state.
- Recipients will receive a stipend for participation, clock hours for state licensure, free resources, subscriptions, and more!
- Registration is currently open to providers who are contracted with the DESE subsidy program, and working in child care centers, child care group homes, or licensed family child care.
- After September 1, 2023, the MO-SECA program will open up to child care administrators in non-subsidy programs.

Sign up today at [MO-SECA.com](#). For questions about registration, email [MO-SECA](#) or call 314.558.6966.

### NEW! Proposed Amendments to Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Homes and Center

Based on feedback from stakeholders, OOC is pleased to announce that we are proposing amendments to the licensing rules for group child care homes and child care centers in 5 CSR 25-500.

The proposed amendments will allow 16 and 17-year-olds to count in staff/child ratio. In addition, OOC is proposing to add group size limits for children 3 years of age and older, and clarify

using this [T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI flyer](#) and the [CDA flyer](#).

### NEW! Child Care Data System Informational Flyer

OOC staff are working with an experienced vendor to acquire an updated child care data system to better support the subsidy program. Learn more about this system in this [informational flyer](#).

### NEW! Child Care Relief Funds Public Dashboard

A new child care relief funds dashboard is now available to the public. Check out the four different dashboards at the bottom of this [webpage](#).

### UPDATE! Grant Reports

Check out the new reports on the Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5) page for [needs assessment](#), [strategic planning](#), and [grant reporting](#).

### UPDATE! Get Connected

Read more about the Missouri Parent Advisory Council and parent cafes [here](#). To connect with a regional council, you can email [Beth Loethen](#).

when staff/child ratios and group sizes apply throughout the day.

OOC will present these amendments to the State Board of Education on Tuesday, June 6, 2023. View the upcoming [meeting agenda](#) online, which includes information to listen live.

### UPDATE! Child Care Compliance Forms

A revised Center Director/Group Child Care Home Provider Certification Request form ([MO500-3296](#)) is located on the child care website.

This form was revised to remove reference to OPEN Initiative and update terminology for the new MO Professional Development (MOPD) System.

Additionally, the Clock Hour Training Reassignment form was removed from the website. The reassignment of clock hours will be an automatic function in the new MOPD System.

### REMINDER! Annual Requirements for Licensed Group Homes and Centers

Thirty days prior to your anniversary date, Licensed Group Homes and Centers must submit to DESE:

- an annual declaration;
- evidence of local building and zoning requirements (if applicable);
- a current list of available equipment; and
- a current staff sheet.

The annual declaration must be submitted on the official form, Annual Declaration for Licensed Facility ([MO500-3291](#)).

The list of available equipment and staff sheet do not have to be submitted on an official form, but there are sample documents you can use.

You can find the sample *Equipment List*, and the sample *Listing of Child Care Staff Member(s)/Household Member(s)* on the [child care forms webpage](#).

### NEW! Training: Strong Parents, Stable Children

A new in-person training opportunity is available for First Steps Providers and System Point of Entry (SPOE) staff.

Dr. Dave Schramm will provide a 3-hour training titled *Strong Parents, Stable Children: Building Protective Factors to Strengthen Families*.

First Steps providers who did not receive the registration information via the WebSPOE message center, or did not receive a confirmation email after registering, can email the [Early Intervention](#) team for assistance.

### RESOURCE! Maternal Mental Health Hotline

There is an updated toll-free number for National Maternal Mental Health Hotline: 1-833-TLC-MAMA (1-833-852-6262).

Since its launch on Mother's Day 2022, the Hotline's professional counselors have provided emotional support, resources, and referrals to nearly 12,000 pregnant and postpartum individuals who struggled with mental health concerns, and their loved ones.

## **RESOURCE! Prevent Pregnancy Complications**

Cytomegalovirus, or CMV, is a common virus that affects people of all ages. CMV during pregnancy can cause severe health complications to an unborn baby.

Did you know that CMV can be prevented? Read more about CMV in this [informational brochure](#).

## **RESOURCE! The Autism Focused Intervention Resources and Modules (AFIRM)**

What are prompting procedures? They are the verbal, gestural, and/or physical assistance given to learners to help them in acquiring or engaging in a targeted behavior or skill.

A new module to learn more about [Prompting for Toddlers](#) is available for free. This module is specifically designed for early interventionists working with families and early care providers and developed by Autism Focused Intervention Resources and Modules (AFIRM) for Toddlers, in collaboration with the national Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA).

AFIRM for Toddlers currently has four other modules:

- Naturalistic Intervention for Toddlers in the Childcare Settings
- Parent-Implemented Intervention
- Reinforcement for Toddlers
- Visual Supports for Toddlers

## **SAVE THE DATE! 2024 CYY**

The next Conference on the Young Years (CYY) will be held on March 7-9, 2024, at the Tan-Tar-A Conference Center in Osage Beach, Missouri. OOC is currently soliciting break out session proposals for CYY.

The link for 2024 Presentation Proposals is available on the [CYY website](#). The deadline to

submit a proposal is July 1, 2023.



### REMINDER! Child Care Provider Survey

Are you a licensed or unlicensed child care provider who had a recent inspection or investigation? If you haven't already, please complete a [brief survey](#) to tell us how we're doing. Your feedback helps child care compliance continue to improve the inspection and investigation process.

You can use the link above or scan the QR code to take the survey.



### Spotlight on Success

Spotlight on Success aims to share stories from local programs that are building community partnerships in order to strengthen and coordinate childhood programs.





Photo Credit: Cortaiga Collins

The new Good Shepherd Infant and Toddler Center West recently opened in Warrenton, MO. This new center was made possible with child care relief opportunities.

Cortaiga Collins said, "The relief funds were hugely impactful for us. It relieved a lot of pressure as a start-up program in a child care desert. We used the relief funds to renovate the facility to be an early childhood center. We also used funds to furnish the entire center. I was able to recruit, hire, and properly onboard my entire staff before we opened. As a result, all staff were fully trained and had their lesson plans complete before the students arrived. That has had a huge impact on our success. We are at 80% capacity with a waiting list in our Infant and Toddler unit."

When asked about how she has collaborated with others in her community, Cortaiga explained, "We partnered with local educators to provide enrichment activities including literacy and STEM activities." Cortaiga is also partnering with local social service offices to provide high-quality early childhood education in a safe and stable environment to children in foster care and low-income families in the community. She said "We also partnered with the Workforce Development program to recruit staff and are cultivating relationships with local businesses to support our operations."

**UPDATE! Preschool Development Grant**



The Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5) provides funding over three years to coordinate a more effective, high-quality early childhood system that better prepares Missouri children for success.

Each month the Office of Childhood hosts a live webinar to provide updates and information about the PDG B-5 to stakeholders. A [recording](#) and the [PowerPoint slides](#) from the May webinar is available in case you were unable to attend and wish to hear the information. You can view archived webinars here:

- [April 2023](#)
- [March 2023](#)
- [February 2023](#)
- [January 2023](#)
- [November 2022](#)
- [October 2022](#)

A [PDG B-5 dashboard](#) is also updated monthly. This dashboard provides an at-a-glance look at priority areas, budget status, and key accomplishments.

### PDG B-5 Monthly Webinar

Join us for the next PDG B-5 Stakeholder webinar on Tuesday, June 27, 2023, from noon to 12:45 p.m. to learn more and ask questions. You can [access the webinar](#) in a Google Chrome or Safari web browser. Do not view in Internet Explorer. We hope you can participate!

For questions about the stakeholder webinar series, or suggestions for topics in future webinars, email us at [Childhood@dese.mo.gov](mailto:Childhood@dese.mo.gov).

### Archived Editions of Childhood Connections

Visit the Office of Childhood website to find [previous editions](#) of the Childhood Connections.

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